

# WOMEN & FILM

NO. 1



FILM HISTORY REVISED  
HAWK'S WOMEN  
FESTIVALS  
GODARD  
MARILYN • MAO

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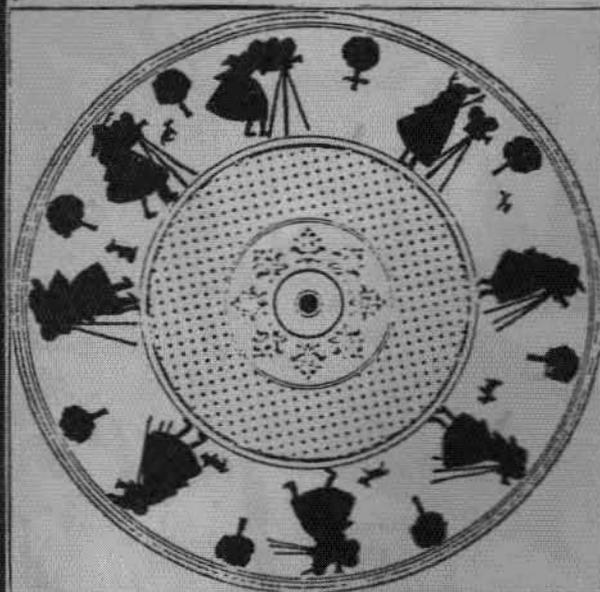
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# OVERVIEW

The tape in the Museum of Cinema History at Universal Studios begins by quoting Stalin: "Give me the cinema and I'll rule the world." Stalin didn't have his way; Hollywood rules the world. The Hollywood movie is an international film model. Europe, Africa, Japan, S.E. Asia (particularly under the Shaw monopoly), and India (to name a few) have been extraordinarily conscientious in patterning their packages after every detail of the Hollywood product. Whatever is peculiar to American film is easily transplanted (where there is the same pattern of exploitation and monopoly film conglomerates) in other countries for local audiences. Other peoples of the world come to know the real/unreal movie lives of Americans but not vice versa. The U.S. cinema, joining hands with local capitalists of other countries, has deformed peoples everywhere forcing them to be passive consumers of an alienating ideology but not creators of their own ideology.

Hollywood (System) cinema is not only the country's principal vehicle for ideological oppression but also a major economic exploiter. In the silent era Hollywood was the fifth industry in the nation rising to take fourth place when sound came in. Even though the industry suffered during WWII, McCarthy, and television, it always maintained significance in the stock market and business world. It viciously generates enormous surplus value off the labor and talents of thousands of workers with an inher-

ent hierarchy of exploitation according to education, color, and sex -- no different from the Detroit assembly lines.

In the Hollywood top echelon were Zukor, Fox, Mayer, Laemmle, Goldwyn, the Warner brothers and Loew - all without exception originally petit bourgeois European immigrants - who created big monopolies and incredible wealth as business tyrants and kitschmen with artistic pretensions. They survived the cut-throat industrial wars and established destructively competitive patterns in the film industry there after. These movie barons generated oppressive ideology, perpetuating false sentiments and values, and reinforcing stereotypes. The top male stars, directors, and other male lackeys had it good, as long as they conformed to System Cinema. Also, a handful of women who became big stars (especially at Warner's in the 40s) made it materially, but most were ultimately destroyed by the roles they had to play and perpetuate. These roles - child/woman, whore, bitch, wife, mother, secretary or girl Friday, frigid career woman, vamp, etc. - were all portrayed falsely and one dimensionally. The 40s saw a flourishing of interesting female roles because the women, left home by their soldier husbands and lovers, formed a large audience to which the eternally opportunistic bourgeois catered. The word went out to package movie glamour queens. Yet these female characters had to sell out within the last minutes of the film (e.g. Barbara Stanwyck running after Barry Sullivan in *Forty Guns*) so as not to jeopardize the system. The white, glamorous women who played men's inferiors and stereotypes were paid more than blacks, chicanos, Indians, Chinese, and Japanese playing niggers, chinks or gooks. The voracious appetite of the industry also swallowed child stars (Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, Linda Darnell) who grew up destroyed by a dream machine.

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